निर्यातोन्मुखी एकक स्थापित करने संबंधी प्रस्ताव

2774. **चौधरी हरमोहन सिंह यादव:** क्या वाणिज्य मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) वर्ष 1997-98 में निर्यातोन्मुखी एकक स्थापित करने के लिए कितने प्रस्ताव प्राप्त हुए और कितने प्रस्ताव स्वीकृत किए गए; और

(ख) इनमें से कितने एककों को उत्पादन प्रारम्भ करने के लिए आधारभूत ढांचा एवं अन्य सुविधाएं उपलब्ध करायी गई हैं?

वाणिज्य मंत्री (श्री राम कृष्ण हेगड़े): (क) वर्ष 1997-98 के दौरान, निर्यातोन्मुखी इकाइयां स्थापित करने के बारे में 426 प्रस्ताव प्राप्त हुए थे, जिनमें से 365 प्रस्तावों को अनुमोदित किया गया था।

(ख) यह उद्यमियों पर निर्भर करता है कि वे भवन का निर्माण, मशीनरी, कच्ची सामग्री और उपयोगिताओं का प्रावधान करके उक्त इकाइयों की स्थापना करें और उत्पादन को शुरू करने के लिए अन्य कदमों को उठाएं। उद्यमियों द्वारा अब कभी भी संपर्क किया जाता है, भारत सरकार, सीमा शुल्क बॉंडिंग की सविधा प्रदान करती है।

Loss of Exports and Imports due to Damage to Kandla Port

2775. SHRI PRAFULL GORADIA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) what is the estimated loss to exports/imports as a result of the damage caused to Kandla Port by the recent cyclone;

(b) what relief Government proposes to give to exporters/importers to offset the loss suffered by them due to this unforeseen natural calamity; and

(c) what alternative arrangements have been made to see that exports scheduled from Kandla do not suffer during the period the port is under repair?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMA KRISHNA HEGDE): (a) Quick estimates of the damages of cargo (both imports and exports) are of the order of Rs. 56 crores.

(b) Some of the steps taken to provide relief to the exporters/importers, interalia, include expediting assessment of damages and settlement of claims by the insurance companies, and advising financial institutions to favourably consider the requests of exporters/importers for cash credit limits, packing limits, export credit and working capital.

(c) Apart from restoring facilities at Kandla Port, which is now handling cargo, arrangements have also been made at other ports to handle cargo diverted from the Kandla port.

Stopping of Finance of US Exports to India

2776. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Export-Import Bank of the USA has recently, announced ceasing of new approvals for financing US exports of India;

(b) if so, the reaction of Government on such decision taken by Export-Import Bank;

(c) the total losses in foreign exchange which Government may suffer due to such a decision, and

(d) the alternative steps Government propose to take in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMA KRISHNA HEGDE): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c): The extent of the effect is currently unclear, However, according to the US Exim Bank press release exports to India of about $500 million in pending transactions would get affected immediately. The extent of adverse effect will also depend on the extent to which the private parties of USA and India are able to mobilise alternative sources of financing. The ceasing of new approvals by US Exim Bank is also likely to adversely affect the business interest of USA.

(b) In conformity with the policy of the Government, various measures have been initiated to encourage foreign direct investment and investment from Non Resident Indians (NRI)/Overseas Corporate Bodies (OCB) and Foreign Institutional Investors (FII). The Government has allowed cover for incremental FII equity investment and separated and made independent FII and NRI/OCB limits on portfolio holdings in a company. The NRI/OBC limits have been enhanced.

As per the announcements made in the Union Budget, 1998-99, Unit Trust of India is planning to launch a new India Millennium Scheme, to invite subscription in dollars from the NRIs State Bank of India is planning to launch a new Resurgent India Bond denominated in foreign currencies for subscription by NRIs. Investment by the FII debt funds in unlisted domestic debt securities has been proposed. The budget has also proposed measures to accelerate processing and implementation of foreign direct investment. In addition, announcements were made for increasing investments in infrastructure.

Blockage of Basmati Exports

2777. DR. D. VENKATESHWAR RAO: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether attention of Government have been drawn to the new-item appearing in "The Economic Times" dated 16th June, 1998 captioned "EU blocking our basmati exports, India tells WTO";

(b) if so, the facts thereof; and

(c) the measures proposed against the European Union for its failure to carry out its obligations under the provisions of GATT agreement?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMA KRISHNA HEGDE): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Commissioner of European Communities vide Commission Regulation (EC) No. 703/97 dated 18/9/97 has introduced for a trial period from 1 July, 1997 to 30 June, 1998 a commulative recovery system for determining certain export duties on rice and amending Regulation (EC) No. 1503/96.

(c) Government has held formal consultations with the European Commission on various provisions of the Commission Regulation (EC) No. 703/97 under Article XXIII of General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade 1994.

Losses by Coffee Board

2778. SHRI GHUFRAN AZAM: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Coffee Board has been suffering losses since the past few years;

(b) if so, the factors responsible for such losses;

(c) whether Government have formulated any action plan to make the Coffee Board viable; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMA KRISHNA HEGDE): (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (d) Do not arise.

Setting up of a Free Port

2779. SHRI RAJNATH SINGH 'SURYA': Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has proposed to set up a free port in the country;

(b) if so, whether an existing port will be converted into a free port;

(c) whether the area has been identified; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?